

## Rep. Honda Introduces Bill Supporting Korean Victims

Written by Mike Honda

Wednesday, 07 March 2007 19:00

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"The INS official managed to avoid jail time, and instead received a mere fine and probation," said Rep. Honda. "Unfortunately, today – seven years after the convictions – many victims and families are still suffering the consequences of his crime. The most innocent victims are the children. This is a clear injustice, and I will continue to work to find peace of mind for these families."

"I've been in the U.S. since I was 9 years old. I consider myself an American," said J.S. Kim, who is now a masters student of behavioral neuroscience at the University of California, San Diego. "My hope was to become a doctor, but I can't apply for medical school or even jobs because I don't have a valid green card. I have no idea what I am going to do after I graduate. I barely speak Korean, but I'm afraid I might have to go back there and start over. Right now, I'm just waiting. Hopefully, Mr. Honda's bill will be able to help us."

"I have lived in the United States since I was six years old. This country is my home and I have spent the past twenty years of my life, going to school and working hard to establish a living here in this country," said Sae Joon Kim, a masters student in accounting at Brigham Young University. "Every waking moment I'm overwhelmed with questions of 'what's going to happen to me and my family' and 'what are we going to do if we're deported.' The past four years have been the most difficult time for me and my family. All I desire at this time is for us to have a peace of mind and comfort of knowing that we can continue on living our lives without the fear of being deported and stripped away of all that we had worked hard for. I just don't understand how the government could punish me and my family for a crime that we had no knowledge of and that was committed by its own agent. It just doesn't make sense."

"Fraud by illegal immigration consultants victimizes the most vulnerable members of our diverse communities, as they navigate a difficult, bureaucratic immigration process in order to realize their American dream," said David Chiu, President of the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area. "Congressman Honda's legislation will provide due process to the victims of one such scheme, and also sends an important message to immigrant communities that we need to be watchful and vigilant against such criminals."

"The Korean Community Center of the East Bay, a non-profit organization which provides over 3,000 units of direct service per year throughout northern California urges strong support and passage of the bill introduced by Congressman Michael Honda, which calls for fair, case-by-case review and due process of defrauded Korean immigrants now in removal proceedings," said Scott Kim, Interim Executive Director, of the Korean Community Center of the East Bay in Oakland, CA. "We believe Representative Honda's bill is an appropriate and overdue step in restoring justice to hundreds of defrauded Korean immigrants who have suffered immeasurably by a handful of corrupt individuals, including those of a federal government official. We urge all members of Congress to follow in the courageous leadership of Representative Honda and pass legislation to provide relief to the innocent victims of immigration fraud in San Jose, California."

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"Congressman Honda's bill justly protects the rights of innocent Koreans who have become victims of immigration fraud through no fault of their own," said Gie H. Kim, President of the Korean American Coalition, Washington DC Area Chapter (KAC-DC). "KAC-DC is not advocating blind amnesty to all involved; nor does Mr. Honda's measure call for such a solution. Instead, it is the hope of KAC-DC that the immigrants receive a fair and impartial process of review."

"275 Korean American immigrants unknowingly fell prey to deceitful immigration consultants and a corrupt INS official in their efforts to legally acquire green cards," said Eun Sook Lee, Executive Director of the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, consisting of the Korean American Resource Cultural Center in Chicago, the Korean Resource Center in Los Angeles, and the Young Korean American Service Education Center in New York. "These individuals had worked hard to establish lives for themselves in the U.S. as restaurant employees, scientists, physicians, engineers, and small business owners. They wanted nothing more than to live productively and contribute to their community in earnest pursuit of the American dream. We applaud Congressman Honda's efforts to provide relief for these victims."